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OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHVJ #0808/01 1031609
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 131609Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5889
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUFOAOA/USNIC SARAJEVO
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JCS WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SARAJEVO 000808

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR (DICARLO), EUR/SCE (HOH/FOOKS), NSC FOR
BRAUN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/12/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KJUS](#) [KCRM](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: RSNA VOTES TO SCRAP POLICE REFORM DIRECTORATE
REPORT

REF: A. 05 SARAJEVO 2374

[1](#)B. SARAJEVO 595

Classified By: DCM Judith B. Cefkin for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: This week the Republika Srpska (RS) government and RS National Assembly both took separate decisions rejecting the Police Reform Directorate (PRD) final report and calling for new police reform talks. At its April 11 session the RSNA approved a conclusion calling for a referendum by the RS electorate to approve of any future police reform agreement. The RSNA conclusion is not legally binding on the RS government but its SNSD sponsorship and the high profile debate will make it exceedingly difficult for Dodik to walk back a referendum should the political parties ever reach an agreement on police reform. OHR will call a meeting of Police Reform Steering Board Ambassadors next week to discuss the RS government actions, which could significantly delay the signing of a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union. End Summary

RS rejects PRD Report and calls for a Referendum

[1](#)2. (U) On April 10, RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik convened a meeting of the RS Cabinet to discuss police reform. The meeting resulted in the adoption by the RS government of conclusions rejecting the PRD final report, on the grounds that it nullifies the existence of RS police. The RS government called for the establishment of a new Directorate for Police Restructuring, which, on the basis of consensus, should propose several models of police structures. The adopted conclusions also state that any solution must be based on the constitution, which implies the preservation of an RS MUP and RS police.

[1](#)3. (U) The following day, the RSNA held a day-long session on police reform. RSNA Speaker Igor Radojicic invited national leaders of Croat and Bosniak parties to participate. The session began with speeches by six party leaders: DNS Marko Pavic, HDZ-BiH Dragan Covic, PDP Mladen Ivanic, SDA Sulejman Tihic, SDS Mladen Bosic and SNSD Milorad Dodik. SBiH Haris Silajdzic and SDP Zlatko Lagumdzija refused to participate in the meeting. HDZ-1990 President Bozo Ljubic told the Ambassador April 12 that he had not been invited to attend the RSNA session. Tihic restated the SDA position against retaining police at the entity or canton level. Dodik and other Serb leaders returned to procedural complaints about

the Police Reform Directorate. Dodik insisted that the three EU principles do not require the abolishment of the RS Police and asserted that police reform was an attempt to change the constitutional order of Bosnia.

14. (C) The RSNA adopted a set of conclusions listing procedural objections to the PRD and calling for the retention of the RS Police in any future national police structure. The conclusions also mandated that any future agreement on police reform be approved by people of the RS in a referendum. In addition to endorsing the April 10 RS government conclusions, the RSNA also proposed amending the October 2005 police reform agreement (Ref A) and called on the RS government to generate new negotiating proposals for the Federation. The RSNA conclusions were approved with 67 votes in favor, 5 against with 2 abstaining. The RSNA conclusions are not binding on the RS government and PM Dodik would not be legally obliged to call a referendum in the event of any future police reform agreement. Nonetheless, the conclusions enjoyed overwhelming support and co-sponsorship by Dodik's SNSD which would make it difficult for the Prime Minister to ignore the RSNA directive. RS political leaders expressed divergent views on implications of conclusions with some downplaying the possibility of a referendum and others, such as an assemblyman from Milorad Dodik's SNSD who is close to RSNA leadership, asserting that a referendum is a "strong possibility."

Initial OHR Response

15. (SBU) OHR is currently reviewing the RSNA conclusions but shared with us its initial reaction that the measures seem to

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backtrack on the previous RSNA acceptance of the October 2005 Agreement. OHR also worries that, if implemented, the RSNA demand to restart police reform talks anew would delay the signing of an SAA by several years. Nonetheless, OHR reiterated its determination to uphold the PRD report as a the best option for a police reform agreement, and is still hopeful that an SAA could be signed before the end of this year. OHR will convene a meeting of Police Reform Steering Board Ambassadors next week to discuss the issue.

Comment

16. (C) The RS government and RSNA actions complicate the task of reviving the police reform process. In combination with Haris Silajdzic's stated determination to block any police reform agreement that leaves in place the "genocidal" RS police, the RSNA conclusions represent a disappointing step backwards. They also constitute an unfortunate abdication of leadership by Dodik and other RS politicians who, in calling for a referendum, have risked tying their own hands by relinquishing ownership of police reform. End Comment
MCELHANEY